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ABSTRACT

The program outlined in this booklet is designed to provide a learning situation for each child which is free of peer and classroom pressure and in which the undivided attention of an adult is available during the learning activities. The main purpose of the program at the primary level is practice and mastery of skills introduced and taught by classroom teachers and reinforced by aides. These aides attend regularly scheduled classes on the techniques of helping teachers and children and are trained in the four areas of sight words, basic word analysis skills, oral reading, and comprehension. This booklet and an accompanying document describe the program and discuss its objectives. (JM)

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Title 1 Primary Reading Aide Program

CS002 748

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Guide for

Title I Primary Reading Aide Program

of the

School District of Omaha

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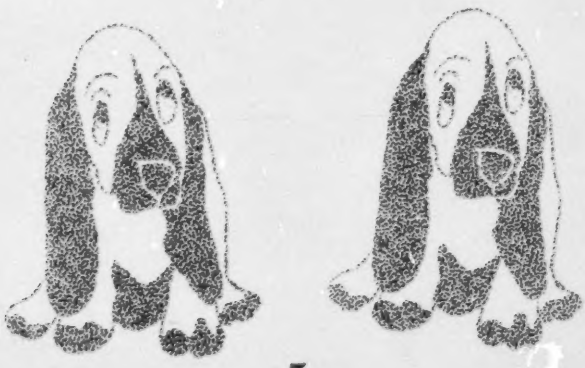
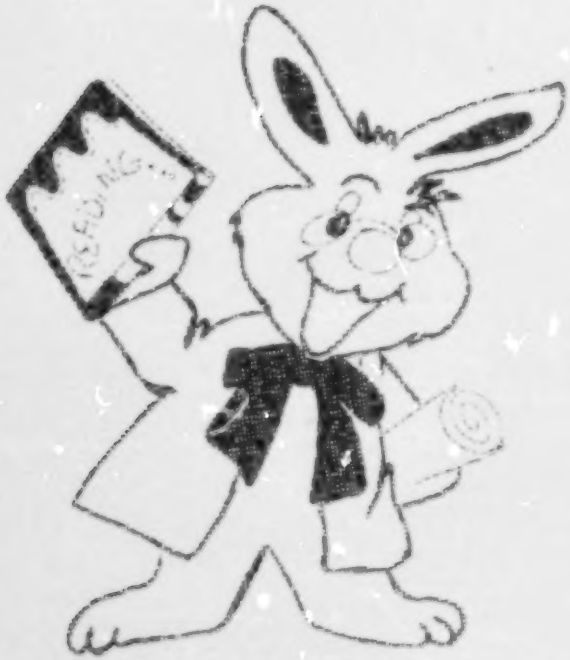
We become more and more aware in education today of the variety of methods children use to learn. The educational focus is on mastery of skills and thinking processes, but mastery should be encouraged while we consider the needs and interests of each child. This means the use of a variety of methods in situations that should develop self respect and well being in each child. The Reading Aide Program makes an important contribution to this educational program.

The aide gives individual attention to those children who need extra help to achieve mastery of reading skills. Aides try to give children a better self concept. Some children have met with little success in life, and, without some sense of security and confidence, may never succeed in school. It is a part of the Reading Aide's job to see that children have success and gain confidence as they practice needed skills. The program is designed to provide a learning situation free of peer and classroom pressure, where undivided attention of an adult is available during learning activities.

The reading aide is on an educational team. The job of that team is to help improve reading skills. Members of that team include teachers, administrators, specialists, and aides. When a person becomes an aide, he or she accepts serious responsibilities to children, the education team, and the school system. The aide is directed by the classroom teacher, principal, and project coordinator who have responsibility for the child's education.



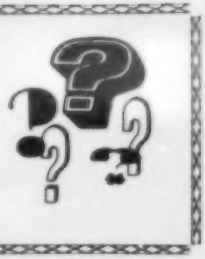


Use of para-professionals places a new responsibility on the professional staff, but adequately trained aides can be of invaluable assistance to the teacher. The teacher's work in diagnosis, planning, and communication with the aide pays off in mastered steps in learning for children.

Early evaluation returns give every indication of an educational program that is highly successful. The success of the program is measured in different ways. The attitude of the aides, teachers, and principals is very positive. The enthusiastic response of the children with whom the aides work is another indication of the success of the program.

This booklet is compiled to answer many of the questions asked about the Title I Primary Reading Aide Program. Further information about the Reading Aide Program can be obtained by calling or writing the project coordinator at the Central Reading Clinic.

These questions reflect inquiries that have come from many sources including aides, teachers, principals, parents, and other interested persons. The answers will provide a practical and useful guide for people interested in the program.



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE TITLE I PRIMARY READING AIDE PROGRAM?

The main purpose of this special reading program is practice and mastery of skills at the primary level. This should lessen the need for remediation in later grades.

WHO ARE THE TITLE I PRIMARY READING AIDES?

The aides are para professionals trained to reinforce reading skills introduced and taught by the classroom teachers.

WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING DO THE AIDES RECEIVE?

The aides attend regularly scheduled classes on techniques of how to best help teachers and children. All learning in this program is done in an atmosphere of fun and games. Many gadgets and games are made by the aides for drill and reinforcement of skills. The aides are trained in four areas: sight words, basic word analysis skills, oral reading, and comprehension.

HOW IS THE TITLE I PRIMARY READING AIDE PROGRAM SUPPORTED?

The funds for the program are a part of the Omaha Public Schools' Multiple Activities Program to aid Intercultural Development. This program is federally financed by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Materials are selected through the instruction Department and funded by Title I.

WHO DIRECTS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AIDES?

A full time project coordinator directs the activities of the primary reading aides. The coordinator is assigned to the Omaha Public Schools' Reading Services Program. The Instruction Department of the Omaha Public Schools supervises the activities of the aides.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AIDES IN EACH SCHOOL BUILDING?

The aides' main responsibility is to aid teachers and students on the primary level:

- To help improve reading skills
- To aid students individually
- To help students practice skills formally introduced by teachers
- To make and use games and materials for practicing reading skills
- To aid teachers in interpreting skill mastery in certain students

The aides should not be expected to have lunchroom or playground duties.

The aides are expected to arrive on time and stay the complete day, a total of 7 hours, 8:30-4:00 with a 30 minute lunch period.

If an emergency should arise, the principal should be notified before 7:30 a.m.

WITH WHAT GRADE LEVELS DO THE AIDES WORK?

The aides work with students in the primary grades (K-3)

HOW ARE THE STUDENTS WITH WHOM THE AIDES WORK SELECTED?

The eligible Title I children with specific needs in specific reading skills are identified and referred to the aides by the classroom teachers.

WITH HOW MANY STUDENTS SHOULD AN AIDE WORK AT ONE TIME?

The aide should work with an individual child or a group of two or three children.

HOW LONG DOES AN AIDE WORK WITH A STUDENT?

Practice sessions with an aide should probably not extend over 30 minutes with a child. A period of 20 to 30 minutes is recommended.

WHO HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SELECTING THE METHODS AND ACTIVITIES USED BY THE READING AIDES?

The teacher is responsible for identifying the activities which the aide uses in working with a child. The aide should make recommendations about the activities that may be helpful, but the teacher should always be consulted before these activities are carried out.

WHAT CAN THE AIDES WORK ON WITH THE STUDENTS?

The aide can assist students in:

- Developing sight vocabulary
- Developing word analysis skills
- Practicing oral reading
- Developing comprehension skills

WHAT ARE THE AIDES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN PLANNING AND RECORD KEEPING?

The aides are responsible for keeping records required by the classroom teacher and program advisors.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THAT THE READING AIDES CAN DO THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF SCHOOL?

The aides can:

- Get acquainted with the teacher, children and classroom routine
- Get acquainted with the principal and entire building staff
- Check for knowledge of Dolch words
- Help teachers with an informal reading inventory which will help the teachers place students in reading achievement
- Help teachers administer an interest inventory which will give the aide a chance to know the children

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE AIDES WITH THE TEACHERS?

- The aide is responsible to the teacher: The teacher decides on the aide's assignment. The aide is responsible to carry out the assignment.
- The aide is responsible for helping achieve a positively oriented atmosphere that will further learning.
- The aide understands that the teacher is in charge of the room.
- The success or failure of the reading aide program is often the result of the aide's ability to work with teachers. A student's classroom teacher maintains responsibility for his instruction, and, because of this, teachers and aides must communicate frequently and completely about the child's needs and his improvement in reading skills.
- The aide realizes that the teacher's responsibility to the class of students she teaches will not permit conferences when she is teaching during schools hours. Special arrangements will have to be made between the teacher and aide so that these conferences may be held.
- The record of activities that the aide keeps will help the teacher keep well informed on assistance given to each child.
- The aide should not assume responsibility for planning or teaching. The aide's work is giving children practice and success in work that leads to better reading.
- The teacher must be responsible for setting direction in the child's instruction. The aide is responsible for performing goals set by the teacher.
- More children can participate in the program, and teachers can maintain better contact when aides work in the classroom. At least 60% of aide work with children should be carried on in the classroom.
- The aide should never be asked or expected to maintain discipline in a classroom or in any way assume responsibility for classes.
- The aide should not be expected to attempt to teach an entire class.

- The aide should not be expected to do clerical work, except to complete records on her work with children.
- The aide should not be expected to work with children without definite instructions from the teacher.

WITH HOW MANY TEACHERS SHOULD AN AIDE WORK?

The aide is to be assigned to assist three and not more than four primary teachers.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEACHERS WORKING WITH THE READING AIDES?

- The teacher, in planning lessons and diagnosing reading problems, should at the same time plan for what the aide will do with each student.
- The teachers and aides should plan to meet on a regular basis, at least once a week, to discuss their activities.
- Under no circumstances should the aides be assigned to a teacher who is not prepared to direct the aide in working with children.
- Under no circumstances should a teacher turn a child over to an aide saying, "He needs help in reading." The assignment to the aide should be definite. The assignment may take the aide a day, a week, or longer, depending on the type of problem the child has.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE AIDES WITH THE PARENTS?

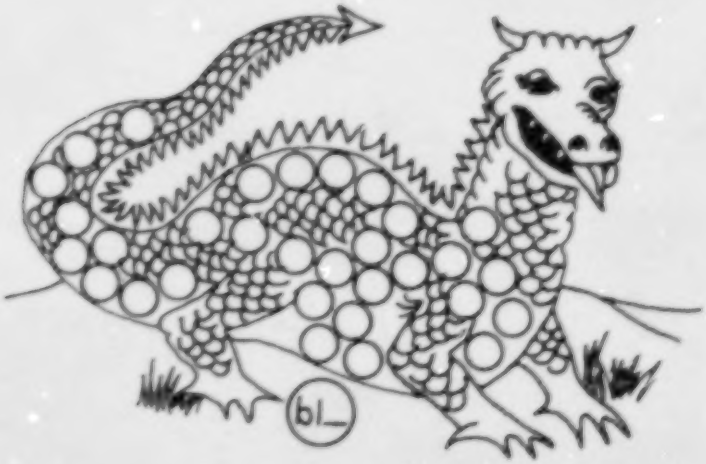
Questions from parents should be forwarded to the child's teacher. If conferences with parents are necessary, they should be arranged by the classroom teacher. The aide should not give information about any child and his progress to any person other than his teacher and principal.

WHAT PROCEDURE SHOULD BE USED TO SETTLE DIFFERENCES?

In case of administrative difficulty that cannot be solved by the aide, teacher, and principal, either of these individuals may request assistance of the project coordinator.

HOW CAN THE AIDES SERVE AS A LINK TO THE COMMUNITY?

- The aide is a link to the community.
- The aide can interpret the school's broad problems and successes to the community. An individual child's problems, however, should not be discussed outside the classroom. This is confidential information.
- Caution should be exercised in discussing the schools' problems so that they won't be misinterpreted in the neighborhood.
- The aide can, in a tactful way, interpret for school staff the feelings of the community as she sees them, when this kind of interpretation is called for.



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Taken from the LEA Evaluation Report for September, 1974 - June, 1975
Omaha Public Schools

READING ACTIVITY NUMBER 28

The need to provide supplementary reading programs to aid children in disadvantaged areas resulted in several reading programs set up to meet a variety of needs in Title I area schools

READING AIDES were trained to reinforce specific reading skills. Children with identifiable needs were referred to the aides by primary classroom teachers when a student failed to comprehend a given skill. Aides then assisted the teacher by review, practice, drill and tutoring techniques in areas of word analysis, reading vocabulary, oral reading and comprehension. Children were thus given an opportunity to succeed.

OBJECTIVE I

Reading aides will receive preparatory training and in-service meetings each month to reinforce their training or for the development of new techniques. A two-day workshop will be held in October to further develop their skills.

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A Guide for Title I Primary Aide Program of the School District of Omaha was developed in the opening weeks of the school year. This booklet helped to articulate the efforts of thirty-eight aides in the singular task of assisting students to master specific skills prerequisite to reading mastery. A calendar of "reading aide events" gives an indication of topics covered as a part of the training program during the school year.

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Reading Services Center
Department of Instruction

Calendar for Title I Primary Reading Aides
1974-75

September 12	Introduction Activities Complete Required Written Forms Committee Assignments Plan for In-Service Meetings Brief Discussion - Dr. Texley
September 26	Review Record Keeping Make Record Charts Discussion

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October 10	Manuscript Writing Lesson Review Workshop Plans Discussion
October 24-25	Workshop for Reading Aides (Schedule Attached)
November 7	Human Relations Workshop Film and Discussion:"Eye of the Storm"
December 5	Audio-Visual Workshop Dick Sanders - Title I Media Center
December 19	Discussion Christmas Celebration
January 9	Audio-Visual Workshop Dick Sanders - Title I Media Center
February 6	Techniques: Role Playing Begin Planning for Parent Fair
March 6	Curriculum: Mrs. Evelyn Montgomery Finalize Plans for Parent Fair
April 10	Parent Fair
May 8	Techniques: Role Playing Instruction for Year End Reports
May 22	Reports Due for Correction Work on Reports
June 5	Discuss Plans for '75-'76

The workshop indicated above held on October 24 and 25 is represented by the agenda sheet attached. Each of the announced activities carried out during, the workshop contributed to the working knowledge of the reading aides. Specific techniques were introduced by consultants. Successful practices were also demonstrated by members of the group.

OBJECTIVE 2

Help teachers with pre and post testing of students, record test results as well as other information necessary to demonstrate the success of the activity.

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The group achievement survey testing program required

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Central Reading Clinic
Department of Instruction

Workshop for Title I Primary Reading Aides
October 24-25, 1974
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Thursday		
8:00	Sip 'n Chat	
8:15	The Reading Aide Program in OPS	Dr. Joe Hanna Associate Superintendent of Schools
8:45	Overview of Workshop	Mrs. Edwardene Armstrong
9:00	Record Keeping and Evaluation of Children's Progress	Dr. Lloyd Texely
10:30	Reading Programs in OPS (System Approach Film Strip)	Ron Meyer Director, Reading Clinic Mrs. Norma Johnson Assistant Director, Reading Clinic
11:30	Lunch Break	
1:00	"Building a Background for Creative Reading, Writing, and Speaking Skills"	Mrs. Jessie Marshall Reading Consultant
Friday		
8:00	Sip 'n Chat	
8:15	Sharing Ideas How to Teach Children: -To recognize letters of the alphabet -To discriminate similarities in letters -To read words from left to right -To recognize grade level reading vocabulary -To recognize initial consonants -To recognize final consonants -To recognize consonant combinations -To recognize common elements -Vowels (long, short, special)	Mrs. Joan Kerchner Reading Consultant
11:30	Lunch Break	
1:00	Demonstrating and making games for help in "Word Analysis Skills"	Mrs. Jessie Marshall Reading Consultant

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little assistance on the part of reading aides. While unified responsibilities were not developed for the aides as a group, assistance with preparing test materials and handling completed tests was carried out in several instances.

A system for recording the reading skills delivered to and mastered by individual students was organized and diligently followed by each reading aide. The daily record of work accomplished and periodic reporting to the classroom teacher provided the base from which the end-of-year summaries were made.

OBJECTIVE 3

Be trained to work with teachers in presenting the following reading skills to students.

-alphabet - oral
-Discrimination of letters
-left-to-right reading
-alphabet - written
-reading vocabulary
-initial consonants
-final consonants
-consonant combinations
-common elements
-vowels - long
-vowels - short
-vowels - special
-roots, prefixes, suffixes
-syllabication
-rhyming words
-compound words
-blend word parts

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Continued development of the reading aide program notebook with the addition throughout the year of games, techniques and information enhanced its value to individual aides.

The program coordinator visited each school during the opening week of the 1974-75 term to facilitate services rendered children. These visitations included planning with each aide for "starting up" with students. Problems of scheduling pupils were largely resolved at this time. Work sessions with individual aides by the program coordinator, periodic meetings and an intensive two-day workshop provided a broad range of suggestions for improvement of service to boys and girls in the seventeen skill areas shown above.

OBJECTIVE 4

Aid the teachers with their eligible Title I children during the reading periods to help students learn the above specific skills and make gains in reading commensurate with their own level of ability.

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Forty-one primary reading aides in thirty-five schools assisted 1940 students. This was an unduplicated count of boys and girls assisted in the mastery of specific reading skills. At one point in time, March 15, 1975, 1358 students were actively participating in the program. These students were directed to the reading aide by the classroom teacher who had pinpointed the specific skill to be reinforced. A distribution by grade of the students served is shown below.

Grade	Kdg'n.	First	Second	Third	Other*
Number	83	847	590	347	73

*Includes Pre-first and Intermediate.

The skill areas for which the aides received training were vocabulary and word analysis techniques. During the frequent inservice workshops each aide developed the instructional materials with which to work. There were therefore, close working relations between the classroom teacher and the reading aide.

Mastery of 23,619 specific skills was accomplished by students directed to work with the aides. Most students developed a given skill through several book levels. For instance 1390 students worked on recognition of reading vocabulary. These students learned sufficient words to advance them by 4139 levels.

The work being done in this program can be visualized in terms of an aide working with a child on a specific reading skill at the direction of the classroom teacher with materials and techniques learned in a series of organized workshops. The full scope of the work done by the Reading Aides is shown below.

Reading Skills Delivered By
The Primary Reading Aides

Reading Vocabulary Skills

Skill	Number of Students	Skill Levels Mastered
1. Recognize letters of the alphabet	559	559
2. Discriminate similarities in letters	311	311
3. Read words from left to right	224	224

Skill	Number of Students	Skill Levels Mastered
4. Write letters of the alphabet	332	332
5. Recognize grade level reading vocabulary	1390	4139
6. Recognize initial consonants	737	2741
7. Recognize final consonants	418	1157
8. Recognize consonant combinations	823	2739
9. Recognize common elements	718	1673
10. Vowels - long	631	2044
11. Vowels - short	778	1731
12. Vowels - special	445	1237
13. Recognize and use roots, prefixes, suffixes	132	233
14. Divide words into syllables	82	93
15. Recognize rhyming words	515	1397
16. Recognize compound words	176	479
17. Blend word parts	363	946
18. Digraphs	629	1584
		23619

A second study was made in an effort to determine the degree to which students retained skills mastered with the assistance of primary reading aides. A time lapse of at least three months occurred between initial mastery and the retention study.

Second grade students were identified who had, with the

assistance of a reading aide, accomplished initial mastery of a specific skill or skills before winter recess. In mid-March, 1975, the program coordinator measured the performance level of the same students on skills previously mastered using diagnostic probes developed by Science Research Associates. Each skill presented by the aide had a criterion for mastery at the reading level the child was working. One hundred ninety one students from eighteen public and non-public schools participated in the study. Fifty students were included in each skill category except "Vowels III" to which only thirty-four second graders had been assigned before the winter recess.

The accompanying chart shows the percent of correct responses to items in ten of eighteen skill categories being delivered by reading aides. Mastery level in letter recognition (upper and lower case) for students referred by classroom teachers remained at the 99% level. Retention level was found to be 85% in all categories except "Vowels II". This category required the selection of a long vowel including vowel digraphs and is usually not accomplished until mid-third grade.

An interesting side effect of the study was noted again this year. Aides assisting the program coordinator with the administration of the probes took note of students who "did not remember". After testing, several aides commented they had reinforced the skills previously thought mastered. The additional input to students showing low mastery levels served a useful purpose.

The mastery level of the 191 students tested in ten categories of skills for which primary reading aides are trained to assist classroom teachers remained at 93.6% level. That is to say out of 14,820 student responses to items on the diagnostic probes in ten skill categories this representative group of 191 students from eighteen schools responded correctly 13,865 times.

A measure of satisfaction was evidenced as this data was brought to the attention of the Primary Reading Aides at the end of the school year. Several then stated ways they felt they could do even better next year.

CHART 2

PRIMARY READING AIDE PROGRAM - RETENTION OF SKILLS

THREE OR MORE MONTHS AFTER INITIAL MASTERY